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**THE
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 FORUM**

Published Monthly at
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 FOR LONG ISLANDERS EVERYWHERE

Entered as second-class matter May 31, 1947, at the
 post office at Amityville, New York, under the Act of
 March 3, 1879.

PAUL BAILEY, Publisher-Editor

Contributing Editors

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OCTOBER, 1950

Some Presidential Visitors

John Tooker, Babylon

George Washington was the only
 President of the United States to
 make even a partial tour of Long
 Island, but many other Presidents
 have visited here, some of them
 have spent vacations, and one,
 Theodore Roosevelt, lived here.

When New York City was the
 capital of the United States (1789-
 1791), it is probable that the fol-
 lowing men who were to become
 Presidents, John Adams, Thomas
 Jefferson and James Madison,
 crossed the river to Brooklyn. Dr.
 Henry Reed Stiles in his History
 of Brooklyn tells of several Presi-
 dents who had visited that city be-
 fore 1870 when the last volume of
 his history was written.

James Monroe came to Brooklyn
 in June 1817; John Quincy Adams
 to the Navy Yard on May 9, 1828;
 Andrew Jackson came to Brooklyn
 in July 1833; Martin Van Buren
 in July 1839, and John Tyler, the
 next Presidential visitor, in July
 1843. The next year (1844) Tyler
 took a Long Island girl, Julia
 Gardiner, as his second wife. Jack-
 son and Van Buren each made a
 visit to Brooklyn before they be-
 came President.

President Grant spent more than
 one vacation at the summer home
 of his brother-in-law in the Half
 Hollows section of Dix Hills be-
 tween Huntington and Babylon,
 and President Grover Cleveland
 vacationed at Far Rockaway.
 President William H. Taft visited
 Oyster Bay.

President Chester A. Arthur
 probably had a more interesting
 experience on Long Island than any
 of them. One June day in 1882
 he was riding out to Babylon in a
 special train on the Long Island
 Railroad. In those days a Presi-
 dential vacation bore no resem-
 blance to a travelling circus and
 President Arthur was accompanied
 by only a few friends and railroad
 officials. He told the railroad men
 that he had never ridden on a train
 that travelled at a mile-a-minute
 pace, and expressed a desire to do
 so. His desire was communicated

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Five Long Island Blacksmiths

IT was ever a fascination for me as a child in New Jersey to pass a certain dim open-doored blacksmith shop. How I loved "to see the flaming forge and hear the bellows roar." The day was memorable when I became the blacksmith's patron.

Many a year has rolled by since he carefully adjusted the iron rim broken loose from a wheel of my doll carriage. Much time elapsed too before I made an exciting discovery.

I had been delving into ancestral files expecting to find at least a few notables when who should appear but a blacksmith — indeed five of him with bellows and tongs.

Back in our American past a man of that calling actually held a place of some consequence if not dignity.

Consider for a moment Abraham Alling (or Allen) of Mill Neck, L. I. The settlers sent to England for him to replace one John Thompson, the first blacksmith of that village. Through breach of contract the latter had lost a home lot granted in 1677.

According to the Oyster Bay Town Records, "Att a Towne Meeting held ye 4th of September 1678 Then granted & given to Abraham Alling Blacksmith for his Incuragement of setting up & following his Trade amongst us in the Towne for ye supplying of ye Inhabitants withall [sic] such tolles and Nesessaries needful. According to his Capassitie, A Certaine peece of Land formerly layd out to Jobe Wright, on ye west side of ye Myll River, And as much more Joyning to itt by ye hill sides, As ye Surveyors shall se [sic] Conveyenient for him. . . ."

Abraham Alling arrived in due course to the satisfaction no doubt of many a Colonial nag. About 1697 he married Mary Hawkhurst, widow of George Townsend. The All-

Marion F. Overton

ings were my great-great-great-great-great - grandparents.

In time Abraham married again. He mentions his "now wife", Mary During, in a deed regarding his property made out to his eldest son, Thomas.

This son, my uncle, introduces himself in the Records as "Thomas Alling of ye Tounship [sic] of hemsted In Queens County on the Island of Nassaw in ye Province of New york black Smith."

His father deeded land to him "Lying and being on ye Mill river Neck and the Moety or one halfe of all my Land and Meadow Lying and being

In ye Pattent and township of Oysterbay." Some exceptions were added here regarding property given to another son, Abraham. In addition Abraham senior did "Grant and Confirme unto my Son Thomas Alling all my smithtools."

According to the date of this deed, April 26, 1698, the father might have lifted his "heavy sledge" for about 20 years, yet I have read elsewhere that he actually practiced his trade only a short while.

Another blacksmith grand-sire of the three on my mother's side was David, youngest son of the dashing Captain John Underhill and his second wife, Elizabeth



The Village Blacksmith, from 1932 photo by Charles Willey, showing Charles K. Shaw, Bellport Smithy for More Than 50 Years.

Feake. Supposedly born at Matinecock, David is entered in the Friends' Records of Flushing as born "second month 1672". He served apprenticeship with Abraham Alling whose daughter, Penelope, married David's son, Peter.

George W. Cocks, accredited genealogist of Glen Cove, L. I. places David's first wife, my grandmother, as the "supposed daughter of Gideon and Elizabeth Wright." That David named his son Peter, "notably indicates," reasoned Mr. Cocks, "that his mother was a descendant of Peter Wright, there being no other Peter in the territory at that period shown on the records." Furthermore figured Mr. Cocks, "that she was a Wright is indicated by the location of the property, as in that region the Wright family had large allotments."

The Oyster Bay Town Records entered David as owner of land on Hogg Island, now Centre Island, Oyster

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A limited number of sets of the Long Island History, compiled by Paul Bailey and published last year by the Lewis Historical Publishing Company of New York, has been made available through the Long Island Forum at one-third off the publishers' price.

This drastic reduction from the original price of \$46.50 is made possible by eliminating volume 3 which consists entirely of biographical sketches.

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logy and archaeology, there are separate chapters on each of the towns in Nassau and Suffolk Counties, the history of the leading church denominations, whaling, fishing, shell fisheries, agriculture, medicine, banking, education, aviation and many other subjects.

Long Island Birdlife is compiled by Edwin Way Teale, nationally known authority; the island's mammals, by Dr. W. J. Hamilton, Cornell zoologist. The most extensive coverage of the island's Indians ever printed was prepared by John H. Morice. Among the authors represented are J. Russel Sprague, Dr. Oscar G. Darlington, Dr. Clarence Ashton Wood, Miss Jacqueline Overton, Rev. John K. Sharp, Chester R. Blakelock, Osborn Shaw, Herbert F. Ricard, Preston R. Bassett, Robert R. Coles, Halsey B. Knapp, Nancy Boyd Willey, Mary E. Bell—in all more than forty such authorities.

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"Findin's Keepin'" Was the Rule

IN earlier days many inhabitants of Long Island, as elsewhere on the perimiter of the maritime world, considered flotsam and jetsam cast upon the shore legitimate loot. The law of "Findin's Keepin'" prevailed as to wreckage and cargo cast or washed overboard in time of storm.

In his *History of Long Island* published over a century ago, Rev. Nathaniel S. Prime, a native Islander, who was pastor at Sag Harbor from 1806 to 1809, expressed a high opinion of the general standard of morals in Suffolk County. He added, however, that "there are men who would scorn the imputation of taking the most trifling article of their neighbor's property, who would not hesitate, under this mistaken notion of right,

Dr. Clarence A. Wood

to appropriate to their own use, whatever they might find on the shore, without making the least effort to discover the rightful owner;—not to speak of any direct efforts to conceal the fact."

"However derogatory it may be to the character of the good people of Suffolk", declared the reverend historian, "a regard to truth demands disclosure of the fact, that a strange impression rests on many minds, especially on the North Side, that whatever is driven up by the waves, is the legitimate prey of the finder."

Certainly one would hardly censure Bartlett Tuthill and brother, who, with others, in December 1860 gathered from the beach in the vicinity of

Wading River many bushels of perishable citrus fruit, which had been blown ashore from a ship tossed about by a nor'wester.

Once in the long ago following a great freshet in Connecticut a house and its contents floated across the Sound and came finally to rest on the North Shore of Long Island.

According to a "gentleman of the first respectability residing on the North Side", the owner of the adjoining farm unhesitatingly took possession of the "windfall" and carpets, beds and other articles found in the stranded house thereafter served on the far side of the Sound from the Nutmeg State.

On Christmas Day, 1824, when the *Nestor* was wrecked on Fire Island, then known



OLD TIME PHOTO OF FIRE ISLAND, TAKEN FROM LIGHTHOUSE.

as Raccoon Beach, a great quantity of drygoods from the French ship found its way inside Fire Island Inlet. There was no mistaking the so-called "beach calico" which thereafter draped so many feminine South Siders.

When the Lexington was burned in Long Island Sound, Jan. 13, 1840, as recently related in the Forum by Capt. H. P. Horton, and many articles were cast upon the shore, countless trunks were broken open and rifled in spite of the wreckmaster and other officers of the law.

One account of the disaster published at the time asserted that much property was thus embezzled by residents of the North Shore. Said the writer: "There are living along that shore a good many people of Indian mixture who get a great part of their living gleaned from the water."

Rev. Prime, five years later, rose to the defense of the aborigines of the Island, saying in his History that he was not willing to believe that the embezzlement was to be imputed exclusively to people of Indian mixture.

When the Elizabeth was wrecked off Fire Island, Friday July 19, 1850, among those who perished were Margaret (Fuller) Ossoli, her Italian husband and their small son. On that occasion, according to the Suffolk Democrat, nearly everything that came ashore was stolen by "land sharks and pirates", including even the chests and clothes of sailors who had to wander about half-naked. On the person of one woman was found a dress supposed to have belonged to Madame Ossoli.

The loot was carried away in wagons as far off as Patchogue. The guilt of about forty persons was proven. In one house were found 1000 pounds of silk; in another Leghorn hats; in another 40 bars of soap; in another 21 bars of soap and in another house several barrels of oil.

In the long ago there lived

in a shack on Raccoon Beach one Jeremiah Smith. There was good fishing and clamming in the Great South Bay, also excellent hunting. Some said that in those pristine days mermaids disported themselves in the surf at eventide. However, it was not primarily for fish, clams, nor raccoons nor mermaids that Jerry

Smith lived on the bleak and isolated beach.

With no lighthouse anywhere along the sandy stretch, many a richly freighted vessel ran ashore, to be battered and dashed to pieces. The loot that drifted in sometimes consisted of casks of liquor, or it might be bales of French

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Unnative Plants on Jones Beach

EVERY TIME I make up my mind that I have heard everything, a new experience forces me to concede I "ain't heard nothin yet!"

One day this August I stood admiring a beautifully grown bed of giant-flowering zinnias against the south side of the West Bathhouse at Jones Beach. Two women bent over the blossoms babbling, drooling and gushing. Finally one of them filtered back sufficiently toward normalcy to inquire of the other what kind of flowers they might be. The answer came, "Sea Anemones. Look like a big pin cushion and grow by the sea. Has to be Sea Anemones!"

This incident being entirely true demonstrates in a most extreme manner the general lack of knowledge concerning seaside flora.

At this date a confusion exists regarding native plants on Jones Beach—plants indigenous to the beach, plants which grew there before the coming of the Park, before the first house on High Hill, before the earliest life saving station.

The confusion is a natural one because over the last three generations soil from the mainland has been transported to the Jones Beach area by boats and, more recently, by truck. Seeds arrived in the soil. They germinated, and the resulting plants thrived and reproduced their own kind.

Then, too, some of the owners of summer cottages on High Hill — the section of beach between parking fields 6 and 9—brought down flowering plants, garden seeds, and fruit vines for their properties. Blackberries were set out. These have multiplied tremendously and now cover acres northeast of the site of the old Savage's Pavilion.

In doing my berrying on the beach a few summers back I

Julian Denton Smith

came upon clumps of a cut-leaf variety growing with the ordinary kind of blackberry. The cut leaves resemble those of the sweet-scented geraniums in outline and remain on the vines throughout the winter. The fruit is of good size and flavor.

During July and early August the dunes are a brilliant yellow at the northwest sector of the Tower traffic circle.

gathered at the end of the street. These went to work cutting back the sides until the road reached its present width. Heavy trucks loaded the surplus soil and hauled it to the south side of the West Bathhouse where it was spread out. The lawns and flower beds between the building and the beach are on Clark Street soil, originally Seaman and Althouse farmland with a bit of Seaman Gore thrown in.



Winter Along the Wantagh State Parkway

They are literally covered with coreopsis. The yellow does not blend naturally with the dunes, but there it is! The seed came in with topsoil, liked the place, and has proceeded to prosper. The birds have scattered the seed and now an occasional dune is taking on the color of the sun.

It is little wonder that upland wild flowers are appearing on Jones Beach for every load of topsoil transported there bears seeds waiting for favoring conditions to grow.

We lived on Clark Street, Seaford, when the West Bathhouse was erected. One day a variety of road machinery

The hurricane of 1944 still shows its marks in the common privet used at the Mall. These shrubs took the full force of sea water lashed ashore from the ocean a few hundred feet away. It nearly killed them. Now, six years later, they remain thin, hollowed and irregular.

The Japanese Pine is proving to be a tree of ready adaptability to the climate of the beach. The Park Commission has introduced it in all the Long Island parks and finds it most satisfactory. Not only does it take hold and live well but it appears natural and gives the impression of belong-

ing right there; not like the coreopsis which looks badly out of place.

The holly seen in the various plantings at Jones Beach has been transplanted from nursery rows. It looks very natural and should seem perfectly at home on beach sand because it does grow natively on older beaches than Jones Beach. Holly trees of more than one hundred years of age are to be found on Fire Island Beach particularly to the east of Point o' Woods. Jones Beach is too young to have stands of holly from a native growth. Its introduction by the Park is certainly in keeping with the use of native plant materials for landscape purposes.

Many golden rods have come to Jones Beach with the topsoil. These are especially evident between the gas station and the Tower on the Wantagh Parkway. There is, however, only one variety of golden rod indigenous to the beach and that is the Seaside Golden Rod. It appears in great abundance all over Jones Beach. The flower sprays are heavy and full with the individual flowers being very large and bright, more so than is generally found in the golden rods. The seaside variety is one of the first plants to send up new leaves in the spring and about the last one to check out in the fall.

The use of sycamore trees in the landscaping on the beach has not been too successful. When transplanted on to the higher meadows in a combination of fill and marsh, they have done fairly well once they became established; but when planted in sand, the diet has been too lean. This inability to adapt itself to beach sand may have fooled many people when it is recalled how well sycamores did in the notoriously poor soil of the New York World's Fair.

A plant now appears commonly on the beach which came all the way from Asian gardens. And it is highly possible the early settlers in

America had the plant in their gardens. It is the Dusty Miller.

How very well the name fits the plant—Dusty Miller. For all the world as though it grew beside the door of a grist mill from which dust drifted to accumulate on the chrysanthemum-like leaves. It seems sometimes that a slight jar would shake off the 'dust'—the leaves are so heavily pubescent.

Generations ago Dusty Miller 'escaped' from gardens and took up residence in the wide open places. It traveled on its own and, helped by birds, has spread rapidly and widely. It grows profusely in beach sand producing large and strong plants. Sand blows against and into the plant formations so

that the plant holds it in place and becomes a good soil binder.

This writing has presented some plant material on Jones Beach which is not native growth but in one way or another has come to make Jones Beach its home. Bayberry, beach grass, plume grass, salt hay, marginal grasses, sea rocket, beach plums, and such are another thing.

Several persons are now arranging dried herbariums of our beach plants—plants indigenous to the immediate shore line. The size of these collections amazes me, so many more plants than I had imagined. In due time a complete list of native beach plants in our locality will be available. In the meantime a short negative listing does not seem without purpose.

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When Pennies Purchased Plenty

TO the child of today a penny is very unimportant, but even when I was a youngster most of the Sunday School collections were in pennies, and some years earlier they were far more important, as money was worth more.

To get an idea of how very important the big red cents were in a child's life, let us turn to the pages of the old and rather rare book, "The Two Sisters" by Egbert Bull Smith. In that book he gives some memories of his childhood.

In those early days the school in Setauket depended for water on an open well, and

Kate W. Strong

the children drank from a bucket or water poured into a trough. However finally the trustees decided that it was not well for the children to drink out of the old "moss covered bucket" and bought a fine shiny dipper to hang on a nail, at the side of the well.

Alas and alack, dippers are slippery things for small hands to hold, and one sad day the dipper slipped from Egbert Smith's hands and went down the well, ringing a chime all the way down, which brought woe to his small heart. Someone promptly told the teacher

(there are always those who love to tell tales) and she sat in judgment.

The dipper had cost the sum of six cents, an important sum in those days. The final decree was that whether he had done it purposely or carelessly he must either bring six cents or a new dipper to school the next day or stay after school and take a whipping.

Egbert had not a cent of his own for money was very scarce at his home. His father in far-off California had seldom had a chance to send money home. So there was nothing to do, but stay after school and take

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BOYS CAUGHT NAPPING IN A FIELD. WILLIAM S. MOUNT.

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Forum

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to Engineer Huff (or Haff) who obliged him by speeding up the engine to a mile-a-minute rate between Amityville and Babylon.

A "Lexington" Incident

H. P. Horton's story, "Burning of the Lexington" (August Forum) recalls an account of that disaster, told and retold by at least four generations of Long Island Cases and Williamsons since 1840. It was to the home of one of my Mother's ancestors, who lived, I think, in Baiting Hollow, that a survivor crawled on hands and knees, half frozen, after drifting to shore, on a bale of cotton.

Several fingers and toes were frozen—afterward amputated—and he was wholly unable to give a coherent account of his ordeal, until hours, or days, after he had been taken in and cared for in the Williamson household.

My Mother, Melvina Williamson, was born that same year 1840 so of course knew the thrilling details from hearing her elders tell them. However, my Mother met this survivor, Mr. Crowley, about 1890 while taking a trip to Providence, R. I., with her brother, George H. Williamson, who was Captain of one of the steamers of the Providence and Stonington Line. (He afterward became Commodore of the old Fall River Line).

When Mother met Mr. Crowley he was Baggage Master at the Providence Station of the Stonington Line. He was surprised and delighted to meet a descendant of the kindly folks who had 50 years before cared for him in his extremity and, as he believed, helped save his life. He gave mother a photograph of himself which she prized highly, and I'm sure it is still somewhere, in the old Case Homestead in Peconic, but a recent search for it was unavailing. George W. Case, Peconic, L. I.

Quogue's Old Dobson Cottage

I have recently been sending my copies of the Forum to a niece who has spent her summers at Quogue (Westhampton Beach) all her life. Have just had a note from her saying "I am enjoying the Long Island Forums but I wish they would run an article on a history of Mrs. Dobson's old homestead where we used to spend the summer in Quogue before father built "Rest-a-Wyle".

Continued on next page

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Forum

Continued From Page 194

Even in 1903 Mrs. Dobson's cottage was about 200 years old. I don't know whether it is still standing or not."

I am passing this on to you in the hope that one of your contributors may be able to meet her request. It was called "The Dobson Cottage."

Lillian B. Remmey,
Old Field, Southbury, Ct.

Editor's Note: The Forum would appreciate hearing from someone on the above subject.

* * *

Ancestry Desired Of:

1. Edward White who married Ann Hegeman (1761-1852). Their son was Sylvanus White (born Jamaica, Jan. 9, 1789; died Brooklyn, May 13, 1849).

2. Hannah Carpenter, wife of Jacob Hicks (born 1665), son of Thomas Hicks of Rockaway.

3. Gershom Smith whose daughter Martha was wife of John Hicks (son of Jacob, above).

4. Mary Smith, wife of Valentine Hicks. Their son was Smith Hicks (Apr. 19, 1804-Feb. 14, 1876) of Westbury.

5. Sarah Birdsall, wife of Wright Coles of Oyster Bay (died May 18, 1799).

Emma S. Underhill,
37-22 Bowne St., Flushing.

* * *

A Symmes Descendant

Dr. Clarence A. Wood's article "Riverhead Boasts First Lady, Too" was of great interest to me and I enjoyed reading it in the August issue of The Forum.

Anna Symmes Harrison's daughter, Anne Harrison Bailey was my great-great-grandmother on the paternal side. Her daughter, Amanda Bailey married Edward Conklin, whose daughter Ellen Conklin was my father's mother. As she was born in Tennessee and came East with her parents from Iowa we were always under the impression that the entire family originated in that part of the country. Therefore it was with pleasure that I read of the Symmes connection with Long Island where we have resided for several years. A member of our family has a will of Anne Harrison Bailey and a daguerreotype of Amanda Bailey Conklin. Thank you again for the article. (Miss) Eleanor McDonough, Amityville.

* * *

Dr. Whitney a Commackian

The article by H. P. Horton in the August Forum concerning the

Continued on next page

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Forum

Continued From Page 195

burning of the Lexington was read with much interest.

On page 722, vol. 1 of The Whitney Family of Connecticut, the data on Dr. Darling Brush Whitney (1810-1898) mentions the disaster, but does not supply any details. At that time he was living in Commack.

I lend my Forums to an invalid friend; she in turn is saving them for my daughter-in-law who will preserve them.

Best wishes for the Forum's success to continue indefinitely.

Mrs. C. S. Van Brunt,
East Norwich.

* * *

The Forum Thanks

subscribers who send in the names of friends interested in Long Island history. It is chiefly from sending sample copies to such prospects that our circulation has steadily increased for more than 12 years.

If you have never done so, won't you drop us a postcard containing the names of friends whom you believe would enjoy reading the Forum?

* * *

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* * *

Now that Mr. Freston R. Bassett's comprehensive chapters on the "Island's Part in World Aviation" have been run in the Forum, let me say that it was a most useful job and will always be of great

Continued on page 198

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Five Long Island Blacksmiths

Continued from page 188

Bay. He had property at Cedar Swamp and with others "an interest in the unsold commons conveyed by the Indians to John Underhill."

George Cocks was satisfied that David's second wife was Hannah Forman. In connection with her, he told of a "very peculiar deed [dated 1700] of conveyance from David Underhill to his son, Peter, who was then less than ten years of age." This deed concerned "fifty acres of land at the Head of Mill River, in Oyster Bay" belonging to the child's own mother. In it David made provision for the use of it by himself as well as by his "now wife". Mr. Cocks explained that according to ancient records regarding a widower's remarriage, "he was compelled by the laws of the period to secure his children's interest in their mother's estate, reserving for himself a life interest in the realty."

Turning to David's son, there is a copy of a deed (in Oyster Bay Records 1728) conveying land from Robert Feeke to Peter Underhill, a blacksmith. With Peter following the calling of both father and father-in-law, my blacksmith lines were securely riveted together.

Friends' records in Westbury mention Peter as serving as constable of Oyster Bay in 1729-30, and as being "destrained" from their Society. According to Mary Cooper's diary he and his wife, Penelope Alling, were still alive in April 1773. Their son, another Peter, was the second pastor of Oyster Bay's Baptist Church.

Passing to my father's line, I found only Jeremiah Vail shaping horseshoes on an anvil.

Probably born in England about 1618, he emigrated to America with his wife, Catharine—. In 1639 Salem, Mass.,

where the two lived was a community of some 1000 souls. It was the largest American town where English was spoken. There Jeremiah practiced his trade, and three of his children were born.

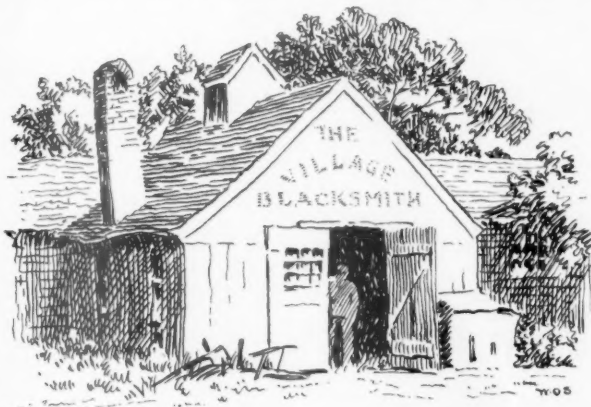
Word of his skill as a blacksmith must have winged its way to Long Island. On June 17, 1651 Southampton held a town meeting and "Granted a £100 lot to Jeremy Veale, Blacksmith of Salem [Mass.] provided he do come and settle here before January next and that to his power he in readiness doe all the blacksmith work that the inhabitants doe stand in need of."

Jeremiah rejected this pro-

posed (in Easthampton) it is recorded that both "Goodman Vaile" and his wife were witnesses in her defense. The trial was carried to New Haven where the defendant was acquitted.

Jeremiah's final move, about 1659, was to Southold either without his wife or her death shortly ensued. The following year he married Mary Paine, a widow, and later Joyce or Rejoice—.

As a freeman in 1676 he held about 500 acres in his own name with additional ones through his wife on the north fork. Perhaps overseeing or cultivating this property filled his time. At any rate I have



A Sketch by W. O. Stevens from His Book, *Discovering Long Island*.
Courtesy of Artist-Author.

posal, moving instead to the Isle of Wight, familiar today as Gardiner's Island. There with one Anthony Waters he managed the farm of Lieutenant Lion Gardiner beyond the time of the latter's removal to Easthampton.

On February 12, 1655 the town of Easthampton "Ordered that Jeremiah Vaile shall have the Lott adjoining Joshua Garlick Reserved for him till his time be expired with Mr. Gardiner." The property was taken over that same year.

In February 1657 when Goody Garlick was tried as a witch (the last witch trial

found no account of his spending it beside a forge.

His will probated October 19, 1687 places his death in that year. In the summer of 1949 I saw his last little home, nicely restored, in its setting of smoketree and box.

His granddaughter Abigail, daughter of Sarah and Nathaniel Moore, married my great - great - great-grand-father Isaac Overton of Southold.

Both the village blacksmith and his "spreading chestnut-tree" have almost completely vanished from our American roadsides. Let us keep their memory green.

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BOOKS BOUGHT

Forum

Continued From Page 196

value to students of island history. I hope this busy president of the Sperry Gyroscope Company will find time to do more writing of an historical nature for your excellent periodical.

(Miss) Jane Davis,
Long Island City.

* * *

No Finer Gift

I can think of no finer gift than presenting a friend with a subscription to your most interesting Forum. The recent articles on Ezra L'Hommedieu and Riverhead's First Lady by Dr. Wood were, in my estimation, masterpieces.

When reading his writings I constantly wonder how he can do so much research and tie things up in such readable "packages".

Elizabeth C. Hawkins,
Brookhaven.

* * *

A Baker Family Tradition

While coming ashore in a whale-boat off East Hampton on January 17, 1753, Daniel Baker, Jacob Schellenger and one Dick were drowned in the surf.

The night before, Baker's wife Mary had dreamed, says a record in an old account book once owned by Thomas J. Mulford of Amagansett, that a high tide had floated a coffin into their home.

She requested her husband not to go off that day, but he went after assuring her that it would be his last venture in offshore whaling. Upton Downs.

* * *

I enjoy the Forum so much that when I meet a Long Islander who does not read it I tell about it. I enclose some names of those I have talked to.

Mrs. Kenneth Boardman,
Upper Field,
Cold Spring Harbor.

* * *

First Catholic Mass

We read so much of the Calvin-
Continued on page 200

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"Jindin's Keepin'" Was the Rule

Continued from page 190

silks and laces, or Irish linens, but all misunderstanding and disputes about salvage were avoided if Jerry promptly gathered in the stuff and stored it out of sight.

Occasionally the beachcomber had an opportunity to act the part of a Good Samaritan. Some shipwrecked mariner might have the good luck to be washed ashore of a dark night. If he died, Jerry would perform the last rites and bury the poor fellow in the sand. Should there happen to be a belt of doubloons around the body Jerry was paid for his trouble.

A report once spread that two sailors came ashore in a small boat one dark night with several kegs of coin; that they put up at Jerry Smith's shack and were never seen to depart. Their boat, half burned, was found in Poor Man's Harbor.

In the course of a long career Smith managed, it seems, to pick up quite a substantial return. As the years whistled over Raccoon Beach, his shack gradually expanded into a large dwelling whose spacious attic was reputed to contain a veritable museum of the sea.

Nor was any charge ever proved against the beachcomber.

Captain James Raynor who sailed every Saturday morning from Widows Creek at Islip to Catherine Market in New York is said to have carried some freight for Smith. "Imported" goods thus found their way from Raccoon Beach to city markets in the hold of Raynor's sloop Intrepid. They were of course always covered over from snooping eyes with Captain Jim's own legitimate cargo of Islipian hard clams. And as Jeremiah Smith himself once remarked, "A clam is awful close-mouthed."



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The gown was presented at a fashion show on the terrace at Traphagen School of Fashion, New York, at the close of the summer session. It was designed and made by Malette Pope who also modeled her dress, as shown here.

Miss Pope's personal experience was her guide in styling a gown that's right for college formals. She attended the summer school at Traphagen to major in costume design while still a winter student at Cornell University.

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Forum

Continued From Page 198

istic denominations early on Long Island, one may get the impression that they alone ministered to the spiritual needs of the first several generations of white inhabitants. Truth is, however, that as early as 1683 when Sir Thomas Dongan, the Irishman, arrived here to become provincial governor for the English crown, he landed at Montauk and made his way through the island to New York which was the seat of provincial government.

Dongan was a devout Roman Catholic and it is recorded that enroute through the island he and party celebrated Mass, which was probably the first such worship ever to have occurred on Long Island and, quite as probably, in what was to become New York State.

It was under Dongan that the county form of government was established here, Long Island having three original counties set up in 1683—Kings, Queens and Suffolk. Dongan also sponsored a measure, enacted by the provincial assembly, guaranteeing religious freedom on Long Island and in New York, the first such step ever taken here.

Governor Dongan's brief term as Governor was productive of more good for this province than that of any other English governor, not

Continued on page 202

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When Pennies Purchased Plenty

Continued from page 193

his punishment which he thought the teacher made as light as possible. I expect the Trustees were horrified at the loss of six cents of taxpayers' money. I only hope when they bought the new dipper that they added a few pennies and bought a chain for it.

To return to Egbert, the great ambition of a boy's life was to own a sled, one of the gaily painted ones with a name on it. They were on sale at the village store but they cost a whole dollar.

Mrs. Smith had raised quite a field of corn, which at that time would sell for a dollar a bushel shelled. She told her two boys that if they would each shell a bushel they could have the money to buy sleds. They worked with a will and soon went to the store to pick out their sleds.

But alas, the clerk did not understand and said that as their mother owed a small account, he would credit her with the \$2. Fortunately the

boys managed to appeal to the owner and got their sleds.

Store sleds, however, did not last as long as those made by the village blacksmith, (I think mine will outlast my lifetime) so by the next year one of the store sleds had gone to smash. Being the owner of three cents, young Egbert went to the village carpenter and asked how much it would cost to repair it. Instead of giving him a price, the carpenter looked it over, said it was quite a job, but he could do it, and set to work.

At the end of an hour and a half the sled was as good as

new. When Egbert trembling asked him for his bill, he said "Well those screws I put in cost me three cents, and I guess that is the size of the bill."

So Egbert was able to pay his bill and depart with joy. He felt like a real man that day.

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Forum

Continued From Page 200

excluding Richard Nichols, father of the Duke's Laws which were enacted mainly to safeguard the Duke of York's interests as patentee of this territory. In the opinion of many historians Sir Thomas Dongan was our outstanding colonial Governor during the more than a century that England held sway. (Miss) Audrey Thompson Pater-son, Queens.

* * *

An Old Time Catboater

John Good's account of Catboating Fifty Years Ago, in the July Forum, should arouse a nostalgic bit of thinking among many Long Islanders who have passed well beyond the heyday of youth. I for one can look back to catboating on Great South Bay before the naphtha launch arrived to desecrate the pure blue waters with its greasy expulsions.

Some fifty years ago a popular course for catboat cruises was through the various south side waterways from Great South to Shinnecock Bay and thence northward through the Shinnecock Canal at Canoe Place to Peconic Bay. The big problem on such a cruise was to pass under the railroad trestle that spanned the canal. Because of this obstruction many catboat-owners saw to it that their mast was short enough to clear the overhead structure. Sometimes, however, a boat had to be kept tilted at a precarious angle to make the passage, and again there were some masts too high for even that.

In such a case the procedure was for a block-and-fall to be attached to the underside of the bridge and thus the mast could be hoisted out and laid on the cabin as the craft moved under. The tackle was then carried to the far side of the bridge and used to hoist the mast and re-step it. I myself have more than once had the job of climbing to the bridge to attach the tackle and more than once I have been caught

Continued on back cover

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CLOSED TUESDAYS

Forum

Continued From Page 202

amidstream by a thundering freight train.

This was quite an experience. Before the train reached the bridge, the technique was to lie flat below the rails and cling on for dear life as the whole structure "shimmied" to the jumbling, clattering wheels a very short distance above one's outstretched body. Far from forbidding this frequent action on the part of boatmen, the railroad cooperated to the extent of having the engineer whistle a warning well before he reached the bridge.

The tidal gates at Canoe Place were also a problem to some of the inexperienced. I recall seeing on one occasion a very fine yacht tied up to the bulkhead to await the change of tide and the opening of the gates, and as the rushing water dropped some five or six feet the yacht was left hanging on its mooring ropes.

In those days the canal was famous for such big blue-claw crabs, which were caught at night with the use of a jacklight, that an especially large wire net, about the size of a bushel basket, had to be used. I wonder how many Forum readers recall these things I have written about, and who among them can add to what I've told.

J. V. Ackerly, Manhasset.

* * *

I enjoyed reading Dr. Wood's article, Riverhead Boasts First Lady Too. He seems to make dry historical facts into such homey and interesting stories. (Mrs.) Ethel L. Osborn, Amityville.

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